

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECIN, PO

SUBJ: EEC VP SOAMES VISITS PORTUGAL

1. EEC VICE-PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER SOAMES PAID A TWO-DAY VISIT TO LISBON (FEB 12 & 13) DURING WHICH HE ASSESSED THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND DISCUSSED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMMON MARKET AND PORTUGAL. HE WAS RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER AND MET WITH SEVERAL MINISTERS.

2. DURING FIRST-DAY LUNCHEON, ECONOMICS MINISTER RUI VILAR, STATING THAT HE WOULD DISABUSE SOAMES OF ANY INACCURATE IMPRESSIONS HE MAY HAVE GAINED FROM PORTUGAL'S BAD INTERNATIONAL PRESS, DESCRIBED CURRENT SITUATION BY STATING THAT NEW AND DIFFERENT GOP POLICIES ARE DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RIGHTS. HE HOPED EEC WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PORTUGAL'S EFFORTS. DURING CLOSING PRESS CONFERENCE SOAMES STATED THAT EEC VIEWED PORTUGAL WITH SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING AND WANTS TO HELP DURING "THESE DIFFICULT MOMENTS." HE ADDED THAT THE EEC MEDIATION WAS NOT NECESSARY TO BRING INVESTMENT TO PORTUGAL BUT THAT CONTACTS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES AND PORTUGUESE WOULD BE FRUITFUL. HE ALSO DENIED A STORY FROM BRUSSELS STATING THAT THE EEC VIEWED PORTUGAL NEGATIVELY AS LONG AS IT DID NOT HAVE COMPLETELY DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

3. PRINCIPAL ISSUES DISCUSSED DURING MEETINGS WERE FOLLOWING:

A) REVISION OF 1972 COMMERICAL AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO GIVE INCREASED PREFERENCES TO PORTUGUESE EXPORTS SUCH AS SARDINES AND AGRICULTURAL GOODS AND PROVIDE ADDED PROTECTION FOR WEAK PORTUGUESE INDUSTRIES FROM IMPORTS FROM EEC;

B) THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING SOCIAL SECURITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TO THE ALMOST ONE MILLION PORTUGUESE LIVING IN EEC COUNTRIES;

C) POSSIBILITY OF EEC INDUSTRIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

NO AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON THE ABOVE ALTHOUGH SOAMES STATED PROGRESS WAS MADE ON ALL ISSUES. BOTH SOAMES AND RUI VILAR REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT THAT PORTUGAL IS NOT CURRENTLY SEEKING ANY BASIC CHANGE IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EEC.

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4. COMMENT: THE SOAMES VISIT IS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF SESSIONS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND THE EEC USING THE MECHANISM OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO ADMINISTER PORTUGAL'S JULY 1972 AGREEMENT WITH THE EEC. WHILE NO DRAMATIC ADVANCES WERE ACCOMPLISHED THIS TIME, GOP TAKES SATISFACTION FROM THE VISIT OF AN EMINENT EEC PERSONALITY AND THEIR HOPES OF EEC CONCESSIONS, THROUGH BOTH REVISION AND EXPANSION OF THE TREATY,

HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED. THOSE GOP OFFICIALS MOST INVOLVED IN
EEC AFFAIRS HAVE TOLD US REPEATEDLY THE GOP IS MORE INTERESTED
IN OBTAINING CONCESSIONS THAN IT IS IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF
THE EEC. THE DISCUSSIONS DURING SOAMES' VISIT ARE CONSISTENT
WITH THAT VIEW.
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